POCAHONTAS COUNTY

Juanita S. Dilley
Clover Lick, W. Va.

Chapter 6 Religion

October 18,1940

MARY'S CHAPEL ON ELK

* The first religious services on Elk were held at the homes of Robert Beale and David Gibson with the families of David Hannah and Joseph Hannah attending. David Gibson settled on Elk in 1823, and Robert Beale in the year 1827. Ministers of the gospel made the home of Robert Beale a place of preaching. Dr. John McElhenney, Revs. Kerr and William G. Campbell, pioneers of the Presbyterian church in this region, officiated at his house and pleasant, profitable meetings were the result. Robert Beale was sincerely and intelligently pious. His wife was Mary Vance Poage, daughter of Major William Poage of Marlins Bottom, and granddaughter of William Poage, Sr. who with his sons were among the founders of old Oak Grove church and at whose home so many religious services were held.(Refer to report for June 11, 1940-Chapter5-Time Devoted to Religion)

* Robert Beale died in 1853, and after that services were mostly held at David Gibson. His home was always open to the stranger that might come along. His confidences were sometimes abused and imposition practiced upon him, but that made no difference in his treatment of others. For years his home was at the service of the preachers and thus most of the preaching on Elk was at his house.

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Israelites and of the Promised Land under Joshua. He saw in these narratives, illustrations of the life now to be lived by Christians It was one of the greatest pleasures of his old age to repeat these narratives in the presence of his neighbors. He prayed in the tone and manner of a loving child to a kind and more loving father.

During the four years of the Civil War, no church services of any kind were held on Elk as the Huttonsville Marlins Bottom Turnpike which passes all the way down Elk was the passway of marching armys and bushwhackers all during the war. Most of the men were engaged on one side or the other and the people had little time to think of anything else but to survive. In the period just after the war, prayer and class meetings were held in the homes. In 1868 the Pleasant Valley school house was built in the lands of John B. and Margaret Hannah and sometime thereafter a Sunday School was organized at the little school house. All church services were held in the school house from that time until 1888 when the church was built.

William McLaughlin and William Gibson were the main ones to sponsor the building of a church. They went into it together, but McLaughlin died before it was completed and it was left to Mr. Gibson to see that it was finished. He financed it to the extent of more than $700., and had it named Marys Chapel in memory of his mother Mary Sharp Gibson wife of David Gibson.

The deed for the lot was given by William Gibson and his wife Polly Gibson to Andrew McLaughlin, Samuel B. Moore, Jacob S. Moore, Jacob A. McLaughlin, James Gibson, Jr., Silas Sharp and E. D. King, trustees, and is dated November 3, 1888.

It is deeded to the Presbyterians but to be open to all

other orthodox denominations when not in use by the Presbyterians. According to the deed " If it ceases to be used as a place of worship for five consecutive years by the people living in the vicinity then the title and rights herein granted and conveyed shall revert to said William Gibson or his heirs." The lot consisted of .5 acre.

Robert Gibson had at one time had in his possesion all of his fathers old records concerning the building of the church, but they were all destroyed when his house was burned a few years ago. The old class books cannot be found either as the church has been used by both Methodist and Presbyterian ministers, but none of them seem to have the old class book. However I did take the old Sunday School records which were all in the church and with the help of James and Robert Gibson(sons of William Gibson)and of Mrs Robert Gibson and Mrs, Forrest Gibson, we went through these records and got the names of those they knew had been members of the church. They are as follows: Jamison Arbogast, John Hannah , Henny H. Hannah, George P. Hannah a local preacher, William H. Hannah. John B. Hannah, Morris Brown, James W. Jackson, George L. Hannah, Ellis Hannah, Joseph B. Gibson, Robert Gibson, Sarah Hannah, Mary E. Gibson, Martha S. Hannah, Mary A. Jackson, Nancy A. Hannah, Sarah J. Arbogast, Lucy A. Sharp, Sarah H. Gibson, Mrs. Samuel Hannah, Jane Jackson, Mamie Cleek, Mary Curry, Menty Arbogast, Mrs. John B. Hannah, David Hannah, Hester Hannah, Clark Rider, Mrs. Clark Rider, Samuel Hannah,

Samuel Gibson and Bowd Hannah were for many years teachers in the Sunday School. People say that Samuel Gibson was one of the best teachers that they ever had. He held Sunday School for years, and years in the Pleasant Valley school house.

The present Sunday School enrollment is 50 but mostly children. Only a few of the older people take an interest in the Sunday School.

Rev. O. N. Miles was the last Presbyterian minister to occupy the pulpit in this church. He has had to retire because of poor health and no other has been sent to take his place. The church is used entirely by the Methodist ministers at the present with Rev. R. H. Skaggs as the present one. This church is on the Edray circuit and the same preachers that preach at Edray always preach at Marys Chapel.

Samuel Hannah was for many years class leader in this church.

From-- * History of Pocahontas-Price
Court Records
$ Robert Gibson
Mrs. Robert Gibson
James Gibson
Mrs. Forrest Gibson
Sunday School records

Jurnita S. Dilley
Pocahontas County

OLD BOOKS AT MARYS CHAPEL-- ELK

How thes old books got there is a question. Calvin Price says- " These books were mostly published by the American Tract Society, and the last published date on any of them was 1840. The publication dates on those old books in the Elk church made me believe the library was brought to the community about a century ago through the influence and probably at the expense of my fathers aunt, Mary Vance Poage Beale, who by a second marriage became the wife of Henry M. Moffett. He was the second clerk of Pocahontas county. Incidentlly her grandson was James A. Moffett of the Standard Oil Company. Her home stood on the road half a mile southeast of Marys Chapel. (She was the wife of Robert Beale mentioned elsewhere in this report)

Robert and James Gibson do not think that Mrs. Beale gave the books or had anything to do with them. She died before the Civil War, and they feel that if they had been in the community during the war that they would have been destroyed as very little of the old things came through the war. They say there was no Sunday School and no place to have kept the books except in some home. On the fly leaf of many of them is written Pleasant Valley Sabbath School, indicating that they were perhaps brought into the community after this school house was built in 1868. They say that they know that their brother Samuel Gibson made the book case they are in, and that they have always been of the opinion that they were brought into the communit, at the expense of or through the influence of Mr. Gibson during the time he taught Sunday school in the Pleasant Valley school house. At any rate he was the one to use them, and they cannot remember of ever hearing any of their forefathers say anything about them being given by Mrs. Beale. They say that there was formerly many more of them. They were pub. by "American Sunday School Union," Philadelphia.

OLD BOOKS AT MARYS CHAPEL

I don't know if the names of these old books will be of any value or not, but I will send them anyway.

1. Concise Dictionary of the Bible-James Covel- 1839
2. 6 Sunday School Spelling and Reading Books-Stephen Kirby
3. The Last Day of the Week
4. The Reel Completed
5. The History of Little Henry and His Bearer
6. Alice Brown or the Patient Sufferer
7. Winter Evening Conversation on the works of God(between a father and his children)
8. The Fatal Ladder or Henry Linford
9. Omar, Designed to illustrate the Jewish History from 63 B. C. to the Birth of Christ
10. Explanitory Notes Upon the New Testament- John Wesley
11. Mary Grant or the Secret Fault
12. Olive Smith- Paul Beck-1835
13. Letters to Students by Rev. Baxter Dickison
14. Elnathan, a Narrative, 1827
15. Let it Alone Till Tomorrow, by G. T. Bedell 1829
16. The Life of Thomas T. Thomason- Paul Beck-1833
17. Parting Advice To a Youth
18. The Christian Pilgrim
19. The Only Son, or the History of Jonah Ross and His Mother by Rev. James W. Alexander
20. Helen and her Cousin - Paul Beck- 1831
21. Memoir of Barbara Ewing, by Grevill Ewing(her husband) 1773
22. Anecdotes of Missionary Worthies in the Moravian Church, 18

23. The Shepgerd of Salisbury Plain-by Hannah Moore- 1833
24. Memoir of Susannah Elizabeth Bingham-Isaac Parsons- 1836
25. The Two Friends
26. The Dying Sailor, or the Victim of Parental Neglect, by a State Prisoner-1828
27. The Pioneer Family
28. The Affectionate Daughter-in- law
29. Memoir of David Brainerd- 1826
30. The Peacemaker- C. B. Tippett
31. Emma and Her Nurse
32. The Emigrant Orphan
33. Charles Clifford or the Children at River Bank-James Alexander- 1834
34. Memorial for a Sunday School Girl, 1798
35. The Customs and Manners of the Bedouin Arabs- Paul Beck-1837
36. Fireside Conversations on some of the Principal Doctrines of the Bible
37. History of the Mission to Orissa- Amos Sutton
38. Cousin Clara or the Sequel to Ellen Carrol
39. The Little Deceiver Reclaimed
40. History of the Waldenesses, from the earliest period to the present, 1830
41. Memoir of Mary Anne Hooker
42. Family Conversations on the Evidences of Revelations.
43. The Five Apprentices, to which is added the story of Edward Crawford.
44. Life of George Wishart, the Martyr

45. Helen Maurice or the Benefit of Early Religious Instructions, by a Sunday School teacher.

46. Memoirs of Henry Obookiah, a member of the Foriegn School- Died in 1818.

47. The Teachers Manual-W. L. Lloyd

48. The Life of Colonel James Gardiner- P. Doddridge D. D.

49. The Wonderful Machine

50. Tract Distributors

51. Uses and Abuses of Sunday School Libraries

52. Youthful Memoirs- Rev. W. Carus Wilson, M. A.

53. The Scottish Farmer

54. The Bible is True or Prophecy Compared with History

55. Memoirs of John Urquahrt

56. The Young Freethinker Reclaimed

57. Lives of Adam Wallace and Walter Mill, Martyrs

58. The First of April

59. April Fool or the Evils of Deception

60. My Grandfather Gregory

61. The First Day of the Week.

62. Scenes in Georgia- by Isabel Dryedale

63. Religious Fashions or the History of Anna- Mrs Sherwood

64. Memoir of Joshua Rowly Gilpin, a monument of Parental Affection to a Dear and Only Son- Rev. Joshua Gilpin

65. Jane and Her Teacher

66. The Story of the Cross-- Rev Robert Newstead

67. Hebrew Customs

68. The Lives of Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, and Polycarp

69. Christian Martyrs

70. A Brief Memoir of Mahomed Ali Bey
71. The Lost Child
72. The Happy Choice or the Potter's Common
73. History of the Patriarch Abraham
74. Loss of Five Meselyan Missionaries in the Maria Mail Boat- by Mrs. Jones
75. George Wilson and His Friend
76. Julia, Changed
77. The Vine and the Fig Tree
78. 15 Methodist Hymnals
79. 12 Psalms and Hymnals
80. Eight Testaments

The Bible now in use was published in 1888
All of the old Sunday School records dating back to 1876 were there in the church. In 1876 there wase an enrollment of 40. The present enrollment is 50.

Of course I didn't take time to read all of these old books, but I did look through a few of them. The one "April Fool the Evils of Deception" plainly brough out the idea that a person who played April Fool tricks was not only a deceiver but an untruthful person as well and that he endangered the lives of his fellow men. All of them, I think, brough out some religious teaching, and I believe that by reading them one could get a good viewpoint on the religious teachings of a hundred years ago.

These are small books of around one hundered pages, with an old fashioned brown cardboard covers. There is a possibe that they were not given by any one but were with public collection as in the old Stewards Boo

OFFICE LETTER

Bruce Crawford

OLD BOOKS

Some years ago I was over to Marys Chapel, on Elk, and while waiting for service to begin I looked into the book case. There I saw a set of almost a hundred well preserved books, published mostly by the American Tract Society, and the latest publication date on any of them was 1840. You can imagine the interest those old books held for me.

The publication dates on those old books in the Elk church made me imagine the library was brought to the community about a century ago through the influence and probably at the expense of my father's aunt, Mary Vance Poage Beale, who by a second marriage became the wife of Henry M. Moffett. He was the second clerk of Pocahontas County. Incidentally, her grandson was James A. Moffett, of the Standard Oil Company. Her home stood on the road a half mile southeast of Marys Chapel.

Colonel and Mrs Beale settled on the Old Field Fork of Elk right after their marriage in 1827. The Colonel came from Botetourte County and brought with him a number of colored servants, among them the Browns. He was doing a great work opening up a big plantation, when he was taken by death at a comparative early age.

This home was the place of preaching by Dr. McElhenny and other pioneer ministers. The Sabbath days were mostly spent in prayer meetings and Sabbath school services.

I told Mrs Juanita Dilley, of the history writers project about the old library. She investigated and most kindly gave me the list of the books, and here they are:

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